

U.S. CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR A FREE CUBA, INC.

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SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(This is a continuation of our Summary and Annexes One, Two, Three, Four, and Five issued earlier.)

This very brief history tells us that the Vietnam war is no isolated phenomenon. It is the prototype of future wars of Communist aggression, and linked, part and parcel, with Communist strategy being followed in this hemisphere. For this reason, among others, our Committee fully understands that among the priorities assigned by the administration in Washington, the conflict in Vietnam must occupy the number one position.

What we do not understand, however, is this. Only recently, the State Department placed Cuba number three in a priority list of six trouble spots of the world, topped only by Vietnam and Korea. But we submit that Soviet Russia's forward base in this hemisphere has not received attention commensurate with its assigned priority. Are we to assume from this that our leaders look with equanimity on the steady erosion of governments in Latin America and find the lodgement of Soviet power in Cuba, an incredible thought just ten years ago, to be of little consequence today? If so, we would remind them that the Soviet presence in Cuba has the fixed purpose of continued aggression against, and subversion of, free governments in the Americas. For, from the Marxist-Leninist point of view, the "revolution" in Cuba can be considered successful only if it envelopes Latin America.

This Committee is no less aware of the current rise in Soviet propaganda favoring "peaceful coexistence" and our abysmal failure to see behind it a tidal wave that threatens to engulf us and our institutions. There is a lasting Soviet commitment to support everywhere the forces of violent revolution under the Red flag. What has happened in Cuba and is happening in Latin America is dramatic proof that these two ideas, if reconcilable in Communist philosophy, are not compatible with safeguarding democracy in the Americas and ensuring the future of the Free World.

We fear that unless our leaders recognize and respond to what amount to a world-wide conflagration of Communist subversion and demi-wars, we will indeed wake up one day and find ourselves besieged with "50 Vietnams" in the jungle heartland and towering Andes of our own hemisphere, abandoned by many weak or opportunistic governments of Latin America who no longer believe in our resolve to keep our free domain inviolate. We warn that if this happens, all the blood and treasure expended in Vietnam will have been in vain. We will not have "isolated" Castro, as present policy is articulated; we will have isolated ourselves.

We believe that how an American thinks and feels about the lodgement of Soviet power off our shores -- the unending guerrilla wars and subtle diplomatic and economic penetration of our hemisphere -- must not be determined by political affiliations. We need more intelligent concern, not less, for sound policy only develops from strong and factual criticism. We deplore official statements and public commentaries that drug the public conscience in this matter. Rhetoric cannot reduce it to a minor issue nor silence close debate. There is a potentially fatal lack of concern in official quarters over the very palpable Soviet interventionism in Latin America and an over-concern about U.S. intervention to protect our own national security. Our State Department has said that the United States will not again intervene in the Dominican Republic. Why shouldn't we do so if the circumstances so dictate?

The most alarming reason for a weak minority Latin American attitude -- Chile, Colombia, for example -- is one of internal extremist intimidation which some governments tend to minimize or hide. They do so, perhaps, because

Russia's determination to penetrate this hemisphere has not been met by equal determination on the part of the United States to fortify the will of its OAS associates. Bolivia is a case in point. Only months after beating off Cuban-exported guerrillas led by "Che" Guevara, President René Barrientos made cautious overtures to open trade and diplomatic relations with a Soviet Russia which had made Guevara's guerrilla expedition against Bolivia possible.

Nor can we strengthen our alliance by attacking, more often than not, those countries who have sometimes had to resort to extreme measures to deal with the Communists. We ask: Do we really believe that non-extreme measures will do the trick? And we answer: Look at the dismal history of U.S. Cuban relations from 1959 to 1960.

It is not enough to say that we oppose the Soviet presence here or that we loathe Castroism there. A successor government to Castro, deviating from Moscow but totalitarian in character, would be equally repugnant to the Americas. But first, Castro and Communism must go.

Our Committee urges that key spokesmen from both parties join in carrying this message to the national audience, sharing with the people all information possible, ever delineating but never downgrading the danger. We urge further that this same position be vigorously maintained in all dealings with the OAS and the UN, that maximum encouragement and support be given member states identifying with it and minimum support given those who do not. We fail to observe these practical standards of international conduct, of selective options, in our present policies. Instead, we find a catch-all program that smacks more of bureaucracy than diplomacy, where distinctions, when made, often favor those weak in resolve and ideological of view.

We ask our leaders to stop publicly criticizing allies who have been forced, by reason of burgeoning subversion and Communist terror, to adopt extreme measures. Our differences should be reserved for the conference room, not aired for our enemy's comfort. And we ask our leaders to look at the record of recent military takeovers, count those which have removed rightist dictators from office and prevented Communist coups, to consider that the reins of government were handed back to popularly elected civilian authorities and ponder the remedy in terms of the risk had they not done so.

It often has been said, to the point of cliché, that right-wing dictatorships and poor economies are the conditions in which Communist guerrillas spawn and are sustained. Unfortunately, it is not as simple as that. If this were true, then rich, viable and liberal Venezuela would be free from attack, while François Duvalier's regime in Haiti would today be little more than a dimly remembered incident of history.

Despite the statements coming out of the White House and the State Department from time to time claiming that we have gained the initiative in the cold war, the fact is that we have failed to make a single successful incursion into the Communist bloc of nations. The Communists, on the other hand, penetrate our hemisphere with ease. What the history of the past eight years has taught us, if indeed it has taught us anything, is that the world's political ashcans are filled with those who, victims of their own arrogance and ignorance, believed that they could negotiate the Communists out of their aggressive designs. It is only the naïve or the political opportunist who refuses to acknowledge that agreements made during the 1962 missile crisis handed Soviet Russia a sanctuary in this hemisphere from which it is carrying out its offensive against us.

A Course of Action

We must first bring ourselves to understand that Communist wars today have little in common with the Twentieth Century concept of conflict. They are an incessant tactic envisaging the total dissolution of the social entities that they attack. Militants take over universities, marches and sit-ins for apparent good causes provide the stage for violence and the rationale for paralyzing cities, the cry of "police brutality" drowns out the voice of law and order and intimidation of lawmakers and the free press inevitably follows.

There is little latitude for normal negotiations with an enemy which is a totalitarian subversive movement to whom national boundaries and demilitarized zones mean nothing unless employed in some fashion to hasten the downfall of the Free World. In Cuba's case, a sanctuary against attack. What imperils the United States in this hemisphere is a very small group of Communist elite whose identity with the country in which they reside has little more than circumstantial meaning. In a very real sense, Cuba is little more than a figure of speech. It is the Soviet Union that stands in Cuba and makes the major decisions. And the Soviet Union must be ejected.

If we are to take the initiative in the cold war, let us begin with Cuba and turn back the Red tide in our own hemisphere. What strikes the serious student of that country is that the Communist Party structure is new, it is weak and it shows signs of disintegration. The leadership is totally detested by a population which, though under severe police repression, has not, as in the case of other satellite countries, been cowed by decades of Communist rule. In his March 13 and March 14, 1968 speeches, Fidel Castro himself said that quiet investigations carried out by his spy apparatus uncovered deep-seated economic and political chaos and elicited from him such comments as this regarding the attitudes of poor street vendors, bar tenders, military personnel and bureaucrats in the Province of Havana: "The figure of counterrevolutionaries is 77.7 per cent!"

Minor riots and demonstrations have been reported throughout the island, with Vilma Espín de Castro (Raúl Castro's wife) saying: "We must crush the counterrevolution!" and mobilizing faint-hearted women's groups to do so. Orders given to the committees of neighborhood informers are: "Hit in the mouth all those who speak badly of the revolution!" The walls of Havana and other Cuban cities bear the scribbles of a desperate population, saying: "Fidel, You are a Communist Traitor!" "Fidel, You Haven't Much Time Left!"

More than 350,000 Cubans have "voted with their feet" against the Castro regime, and, according to figures released in March 1968 by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, at least another million Cubans are waiting to get out of the country. Rudolf P. Shliapnikov, a Soviet state Security officer in Cuba, has summed up the state of internal rebellion, saying: "In Cuba, conditions are present for a new Hungary." The Muscovite also cast doubts on the ability of Cuba's security system to handle a determined uprising because, he warned, it is filled with "petit bourgeoisie." One need only to grasp the importance of the position held in Russia by the pro-Western spy, Colonel Oleg Penkovsky, to understand what can be done in a much less mature Communist system beset with almost insuperable internal problems.

What we must do to seize the initiative and abort attempts to create other "Vietnams" in this hemisphere is to move our political and unconventional warfare tactics out of our own periphery and into the periphery of the enemy -- specifically Cuba. Set them in motion in response to a set of strategic and tactical options available to us.

There are both practical and moral reasons for the United States to take action. Dozens of documented incidents of Cuban-Russian aggression against Latin American nations fill the dossiers of OAS diplomats; Cuban-supported race wars envelop our cities; sabotage and terror is rampant in the U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The Communists must be ejected from power in Cuba and denied their purpose, already partially realized, of making that island the "North Vietnam" or "North Korea" of the Western Hemisphere.

Enough internal pressures must be mounted to force the Soviets out of Cuba like the cork out of a bottle of rapidly shaken soda water. No foreign military establishment can long survive in a hostile and volatile land. Cuban exiles in the United States stand ready to provide the unconventional force, to be trained and rebuild and resupply the growing underground resistance to Castro and Communism.

There is ample evidence that a crisis may arise in Cuba of such a nature that the United States could not, with honor and without totally destroying the remaining faith of our allies, withhold from direct intervention. The rising spirit

of rebellion in Cuba cannot be ignored, nor its consequences to the United States minimized. Indifference toward the Cuban problem, including ignoring the internal resistance of the Cuban people, are most likely to eventuate in catastrophic incident and desperate, innovated, decision. The hesitations and mistakes which have marked our national course toward Cuba since 1959 bear sufficient witness to this.

For those who counsel that our Cuba policy remains unchanged, who see the Soviet Union as a rather jolly giant interested in little more than trade and diplomatic relations with Latin nations, we refer them to the ultimate authority on these matters, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev. He reported his views on Latin America to the XXIII Party Congress in the following terms:

"Special mention must be made of the courageous struggles of the peoples of Latin America. Only recently, the United States regarded Latin America as its reliable rear. There is not a single country in that continent today where the peoples are not waging a struggle against United States imperialism.... This struggle is headed by the working class and the Communist parties.... Comrades, the CPSU sees its internationalist duty in continuing to do its utmost to support the struggle of the peoples for final liberation from colonial and neo-colonial oppression."

So much for "peaceful coexistence." More immediately important, the "objective conditions" for the United States to re-secure its once "reliable rear" are present. And we have the opportunity to do something about it which would never be passed up by our more vigorous Communist enemies.

If we fail, there must take place in the Western Hemisphere a further advance by a political force wholly alien and hostile to the ideals and institutional objects for which its nations and individuals have striven since George Washington and Simón Bolívar.

The fact is that National Liberation Fronts, formally allied with and copied after the NLF in South Vietnam, now exist in many Latin American countries. Like their Vietnamese prototype, these Latin NLFs are the political brains of guerrilla bands -- the "Viet Cong" of this hemisphere.

What is at stake in current negotiations for peace, therefore, is not merely Vietnam, but a defining of the U.S. position in the face of burgeoning "wars of national liberation" throughout the world. Should U.S. negotiators agree that the South Vietnamese NLF be included in a coalition government, they will have established a precedent which can have no effect other than to facilitate similar demands by Communists in this hemisphere. We will have undercut governments which for years have been struggling with the Latin American version of the Viet Cong, add to their growing distrust of U.S. intentions and provide impetus, first toward neutrality and accommodation, then capitulation to the Communists. Should this be permitted to happen, all of the defense treaties, aid programs and cultural and political advances made by the inter-American community, nearly two centuries, will have been scrapped for an ephemeral military disengagement 10,000 miles from our shores.

The United States must protect its national security by taking bold and positive steps toward strengthening the resolve of our neighbors to remain free. Create a climate of victory and peace -- victory over Communists who are tearing at the fabric of the inter-American system and peace with the people they enslave or seek to enslave. The fearful Communist advance in this hemisphere must be repelled and our free domain made inviolate. Obviously, no such pronouncement of a posture will in itself be convincing unless attended by appropriate changes in policy. And some changes in policy are offered. None in itself would have major effect. In combination, if they did not undermine the Cuba-Russian alliance, they would at least better prepare the United States for the final trial which is being readied against it:

1. Train, aid and support freedom fighters in exile.
2. Assist in the formation of a provisional revolutionary council for Cuba which would be capable of administering aid, reorganizing underground forces inside Cuba, and providing them with instructions.

3. Form an inter-American voluntary task force for eventual use should an internal break-down occur in Cuba in response to points 1 and 2.
4. Have a vigorous program to alert our NATO allies to the danger of Communist moves in Latin America. Do not down-grade that danger as is the case today. Call upon NATO partners to respond to our leadership in an embargo of all trade with Cuba, and use all the tools of diplomacy and economic persuasion to this end.
5. Apply pressures in Latin America to deny the Soviet Union trade and diplomatic relations so long as Cuba remains as a base of subversion in this hemisphere.
6. Review and cut the list of strategic and semi-strategic items which may today be shipped to the Soviet Union and its satellites. Show our Latin American allies by example that we will not trade with an enemy bent on subverting our friends.
7. Impose comprehensive sanctions on all shipping going to and from Cuba to include all vessels of any line trading with Cuba.
8. Regain the confidence of our allies and the people of Cuba by meaning and doing what we say. Our overseas propaganda must be unrelenting in its attacks upon the Communist doctrine and specific in bludgeoning Fidel Castro and Cuban Communist leaders for every act of human persecution committed by them. Present policy has shut off all propaganda programs previously broadcast into Cuba and left both Cubans and South Americans cut off from hope or promise that the one will be rescued or the other protected.
9. Sponsor the establishment of OAS machinery for democratic elections in post-Communist Cuba.

None of these is a radical proposal. Several engage marginal risks. But they are preferable to the besetting danger that the United States, by maintaining a negative attitude toward the emergence of Cuba as the "North Vietnam" of the Western Hemisphere, depresses all resistance to Castroism and to the onrushing presence of the Soviet Union in hemispheric affairs. It is this attitude that can only result in steady retreat and lead to ultimate defeat -- not in the Far East, but in our own hemisphere and in America's towns and cities.

Too long have succeeding administrations in Washington refused to acknowledge the peril posed to our national security by a predatory Russian-backed Cuba. The aim is total; the force will never stop of its own. We believe that if enough light is given, the people will find the way, and Government must heed.

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